

new development areas that may include the creation of endowments for such purposes.

- Investigate the transfer of density among adjoining or nearby parcels in exchange for open green areas.
- Where development has already occurred, consider conservation and scenic easements, taxation programs, and other techniques for the creation, preservation and maintenance of open spaces on these sites.
- Coordinate with Arlington and Fairfax Counties to implement the plan to protect and connect open space linkages in new development areas, where applicable.

GOAL 6. PROTECT AND PRESERVE INSTITUTIONALLY-OWNED OPEN SPACE

Some of the most significant open spaces in the City are institutionally owned. The greatest aggregate of these open spaces is located in the geographic center of the City, between Quaker Lane, Seminary Road, N. Howard Street and Braddock Road. These open spaces, as well as others, include significant natural and environmental, as well as historical and archeological,

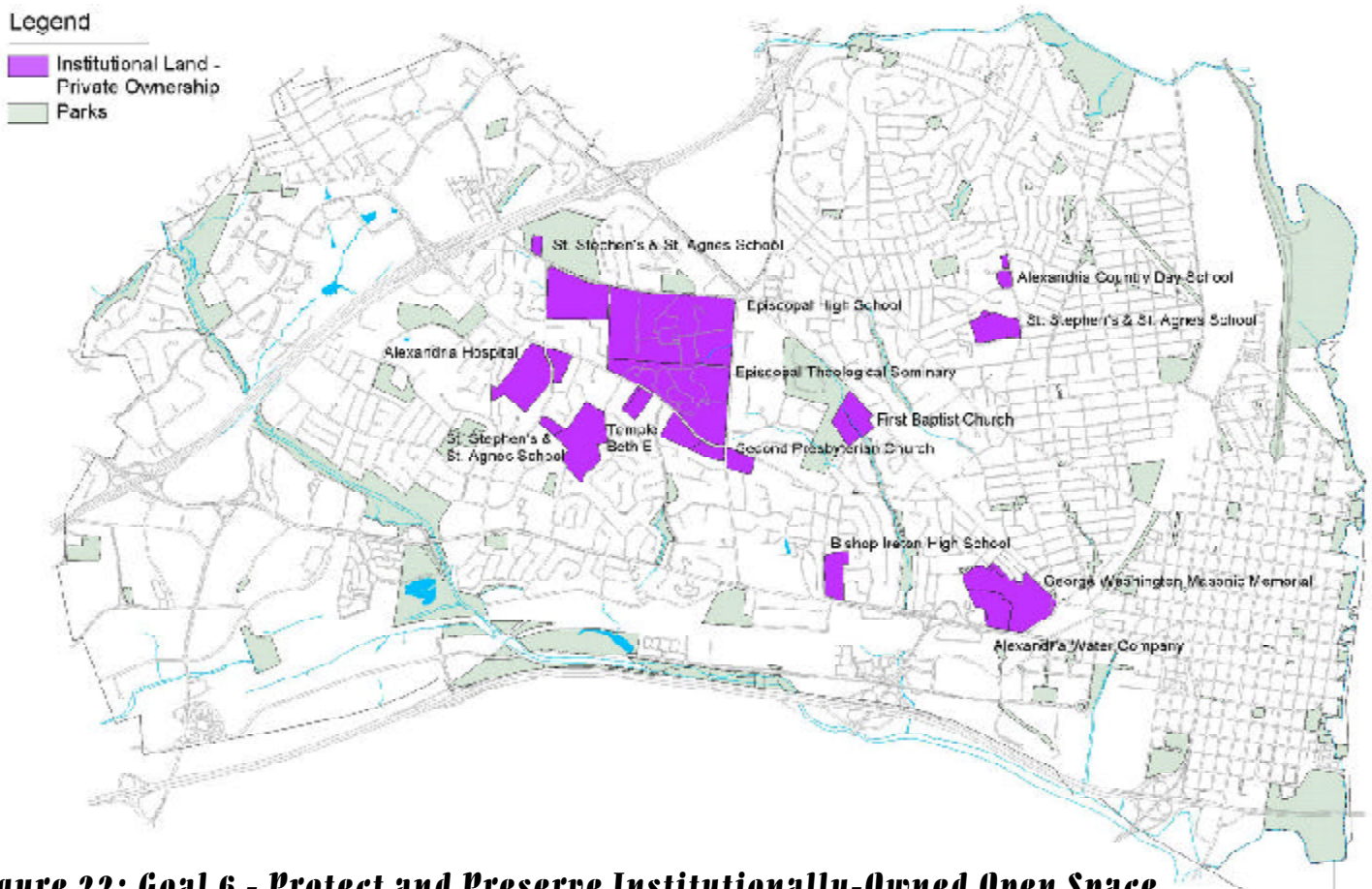


Figure 22: Goal 6 - Protect and Preserve Institutionally-Owned Open Space



Institutional open space with large woodland areas



Institutional open space



Institutional open space



Episcopal High School

resources. The City, together with these institutions, should collaborate on protecting, in perpetuity, these important open spaces. The Plan should develop strategies to preserve and protect these resources.

Recommendations for Goal 6

- Preserve and protect all, or significant parts, of the following sites:
 - Northern Virginia Community College/Alexandria Campus
 - Episcopal High School
 - Episcopal Theological Seminary
 - Second Presbyterian Church
 - Diocese Church School
 - First Baptist Church
 - Bishop Ireton High School
 - George Washington National Masonic Memorial
 - Virginia American Water Company
 - Sts. Agnes and Steven's Schools
 - Winkler Botanical Preserve
 - INOVA Alexandria Hospital
- Inventory historical and natural resources in these open spaces and assist in writing stewardship plans. Create a mechanism to identify additional properties that should be included in such plans.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 6

- Establish a strategy for working collaboratively with the institutions owning such land in order to establish an appropriate approach to open space preservation and public benefit.
- Encourage conservation easements or other similar actions, with benefits to institutional and nonprofit organizations.
- Encourage the City to explore additional actions, some of which might include:
 - Rights of first refusal (should be the City's first line of action when land becomes available)
 - Gifts of land
 - Conservation restrictions
 - Tree cover protection measures
 - Trail, scenic and/or historic easements
 - Fee simple acquisition
 - Purchase of development rights
- Consider zoning institutional open space sites with an Open Space Overlay Protection Zone to require significant preservation areas and



MacArthur School



MacArthur School playground area

discretionary review of future development proposals.

GOAL 7. MAXIMIZE USE OF PUBLIC SCHOOL OPEN SPACE AREAS TO SATISFY LOCAL NEEDS

The open spaces associated with the City's elementary, middle and high schools presently serve both students and neighborhood residents. Most of the spaces around schools are utilized for recreation; however, some of the school sites have significant natural resources that are worthy of preservation. The City should partner with the Alexandria School Board to achieve an open space strategy that recognizes the educational, recreational, and environmental purposes of open space areas around school facilities. This strategy needs to define ways to preserve, maintain and, where possible, expand open space and natural areas around schools for both the schools and the community at large, without adversely affecting the school's ability to provide sufficient space for instructional purposes.

In addition, school sites are important civic landmarks and should have well-landscaped grounds that contribute to the quality of the built environment.

Recommendations for Goal 7

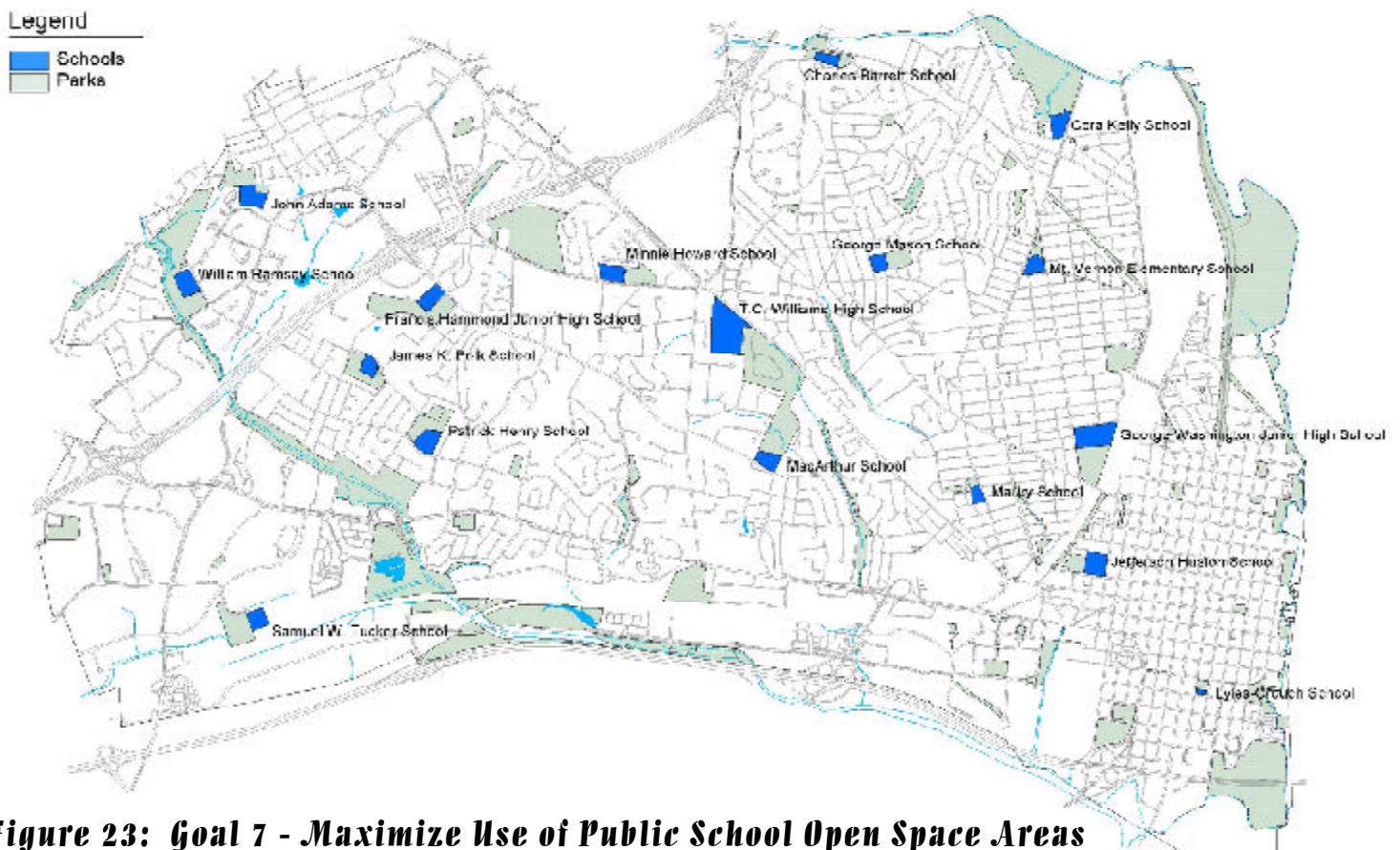
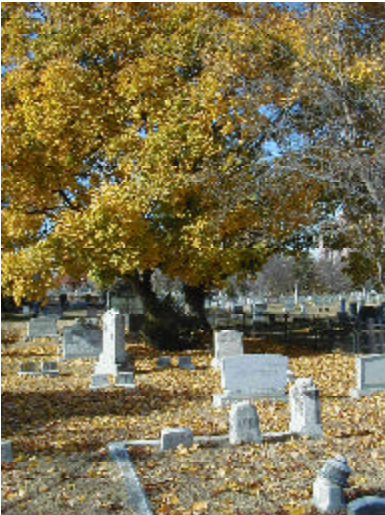


Figure 23: Goal 7 - Maximize Use of Public School Open Space Areas to Satisfy Local Needs

- Continue to upgrade school open space properties to serve the local needs of the surrounding communities.
- Where appropriate, link school open space areas to the City's other open space resources.
- Recognize the educational qualities provided by well-designed open space areas.
- Continue to coordinate the planning of parks and schools with the goal of making efficient use of these important public resources.
- Where appropriate, cluster active recreation uses near school properties to serve local needs.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 7

- Establish a team for each school project that is representative of the Alexandria School Board; private institutions; the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; the Department of Planning and Zoning; and the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services in order to identify innovative and effective solutions for use of school open space areas by neighborhood residents while satisfying outdoor school programs. This working relationship should extend to the planning and design of both new and renovated school properties.



Alexandria National Cemetery

GOAL 8. PRESERVE AND PROTECT CEMETERIES

Cemeteries provide important open space, visual and cultural resources. Some communities have collaborated with cemeteries to establish trails and protect natural resources. Arlington National Cemetery is a notable nearby example. The Cemetery staff worked with Arlington County to create a scenic bike trail linking Memorial Bridge with Route 50 and to protect natural and archeological resources. Alexandria's Plan should recognize that cemeteries are important open space and scenic resources for the neighborhoods in which they are located and for the City as a whole. The cemeteries in Alexandria are in critical locations and can provide outstanding linkages to other open spaces. Figure 24 indicates those cemeteries that contribute most significantly to the open space system in Alexandria.

Recommendations for Goal 8

- Consider cemeteries as educational resources. Develop interpretive signage and, possibly, tours describing the history and significance of each of the City's key cemeteries.
- Protect natural and cultural resources (e.g., trees and streams) in cemeteries, recognizing that some may be important also as features of the



Alexandria National Cemetery

cultural landscape.

- Protect cultural resources that define the character of cemeteries (e.g., gravestones, fences, etc.).
- Increase public awareness that behavior in cemeteries should be different than that which is appropriate in other open spaces.
- Support the restoration and commemoration efforts at Freedmen's and other historic cemeteries.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 8

- Work with owners and administrators of the cemeteries within the City to protect the sanctity of these sites while still allowing for visual access, open space linkages, natural resource protection, and interpretation where appropriate.
- List, map, and create a guide to Alexandria's cemeteries in order to heighten public awareness of their extent and location.
- In cemeteries with unique natural resources, consider developing public/private partnerships for the maintenance of sensitive environmental



Figure 24: Goal 8 - Preserve and Protect Cemeteries

and cultural resource areas, including use of tools such as historic and scenic easements, where appropriate.

GOAL 9. CREATE PUBLIC OPEN SPACE FROM VACANT LAND

Vacant properties tend to be small in size (less than three acres). However, some of these sites are situated adjacent to existing parks or other open space sites identified in this study and, therefore, have potential to link to or expand those existing open spaces. Others include modified natural resource areas, such as diverted streams or cleared woodlands. Precedents abound where vacant land has been rehabilitated into parkland through creative planning and design.

Recommendations for Goal 9

- Preserve, protect and enhance vacant lands as public open space amenities. Priority sites include those meeting the following criteria:
 - Vacant land near existing parks (e.g., vacant land near Monticello and Four Mile Run Parks)
 - Next to existing schools
 - Next to natural resource areas
 - At street endings to provide neighborhood linkages
 - Next to institutional properties
 - Adjacent to or linking existing/proposed trails

Legend

- Vacant Land (Private Ownership)
- Vacant Land (Public Ownership)
- Parks

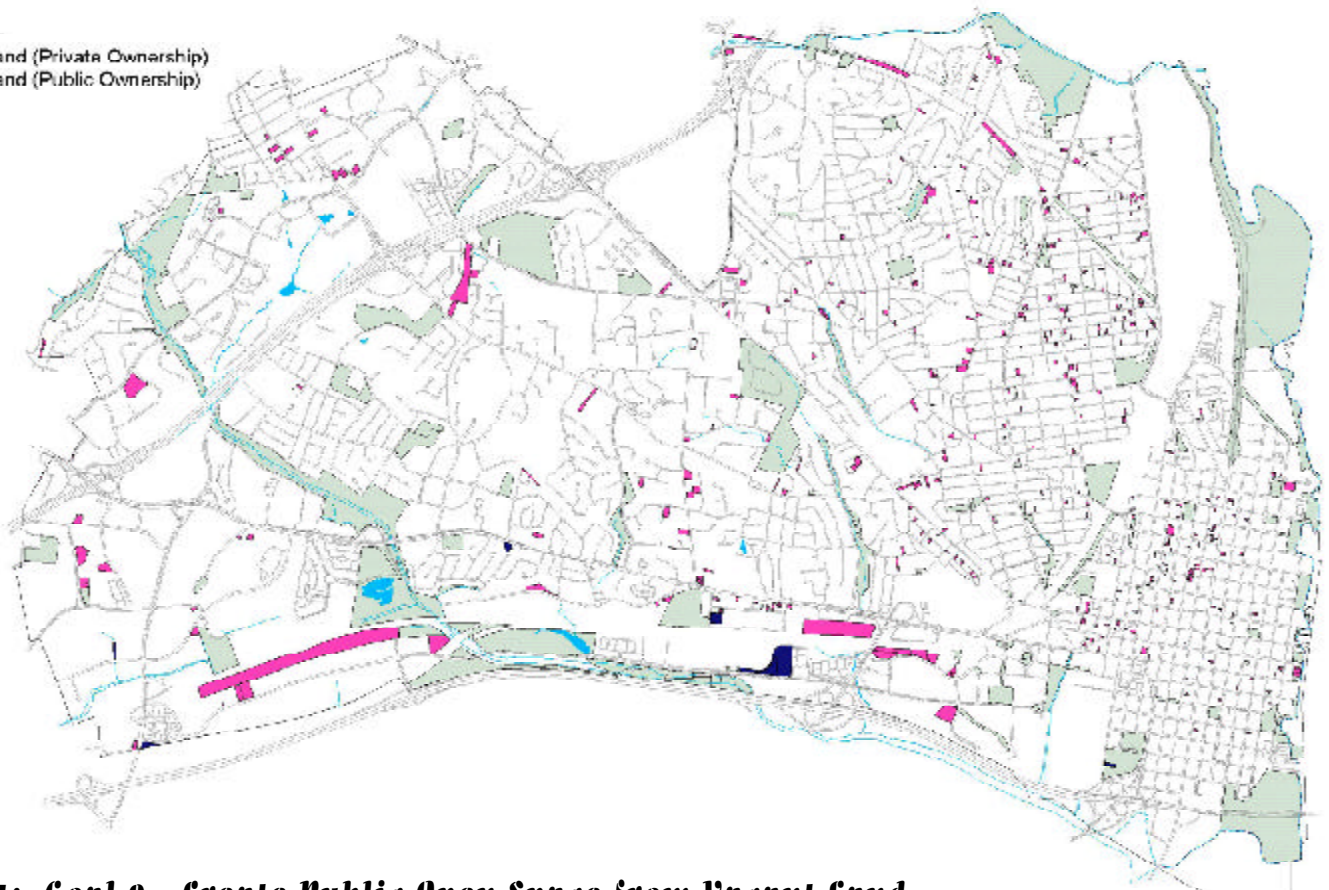


Figure 25: Goal 9 - Create Public Open Space from Vacant Land

- Small lots in dense urban neighborhoods for neighborhood parks, gardens, playgrounds (Old Town, Rosemont, the west end of the City, Del Ray, etc.)
- Vacant lands with significant trees, sloping terrain, and other natural resources
- Land with historical and cultural resources
- Underutilized building sites that could be converted to recreational open space uses where open space is limited (i.e., west end of City)
- Land with the potential to become easements

Implementation Strategies for Goal 9

- Undertake a detailed survey of all vacant lands, rights-of-way, and alleys/street ends in order to understand the City's potential open space opportunities for these sources.
- For public vacant lands:
 - Establish a vacant land program to convert underutilized and vacant land into public open space.
 - Transfer critical vacant land sites to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (see criteria established earlier in this chapter for determining critical sites).
- For private vacant lands:
 - Actively identify "key" vacant parcels or portions of larger vacant parcels according to criteria listed earlier in this chapter.
 - Purchase or otherwise acquire strategic sites for open space purposes.
 - Actively seek grants and other funding sources to ensure that resources other than those of the City can be used for this purpose.
- Work collaboratively with other citywide interests (e.g., schools, and affordable housing advocates) to define a strategy from which everyone stands to gain in the definition/use of vacant properties.
- Reference conservation easements and other protection measures as a precursor to acquisition.



Existing trails

GOAL 10. LINK AND EXPAND PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND TRAIL SYSTEM

The City of Alexandria has established a strong initial system of trails through its Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use Trail Master Plan adopted by City Council in 1998. This City needs to fully implement this plan and maximize non-vehicular, City-wide trail linkages connecting neighborhoods, public facilities and parks, retail establishments, and employment centers in order to encourage healthful recreation and non-motorized transportation. Many of the open spaces identified in this study are suitable for inclusion in the bicycle and

trail system. This goal is crucial in the framework concept of “making connections,” particularly in the stream valleys, along the Potomac River, and in the Green Crescent areas.

Recommendations for Goal 10

- Fully integrate the City’s multi-use trail system into the City’s transportation planning process, thereby recognizing bicycling and walking as important components in addressing Alexandria’s transportation needs. Special consideration should be given to those segments of the population without access to personal vehicles, principally children, the economically disadvantaged, and the physically challenged.
- Expand the City’s multi-use trail system to address the objective of the City’s bicycle and trail master transportation plan to “reduce the rate of increase of vehicle trips.”
- Expand the City’s multi-use trail system to address the need to expand recreational opportunities to improve the physical health of the citizens of Alexandria.
- Implement the Alexandria Heritage Trail as a component of the multi-use trail plan to promote historical and cultural understanding of the

Legend

- Existing and Planned Multi-Use Trails and Bicycle Routes
- Proposed Multi-Use Trails and Bicycle Routes
- Parks

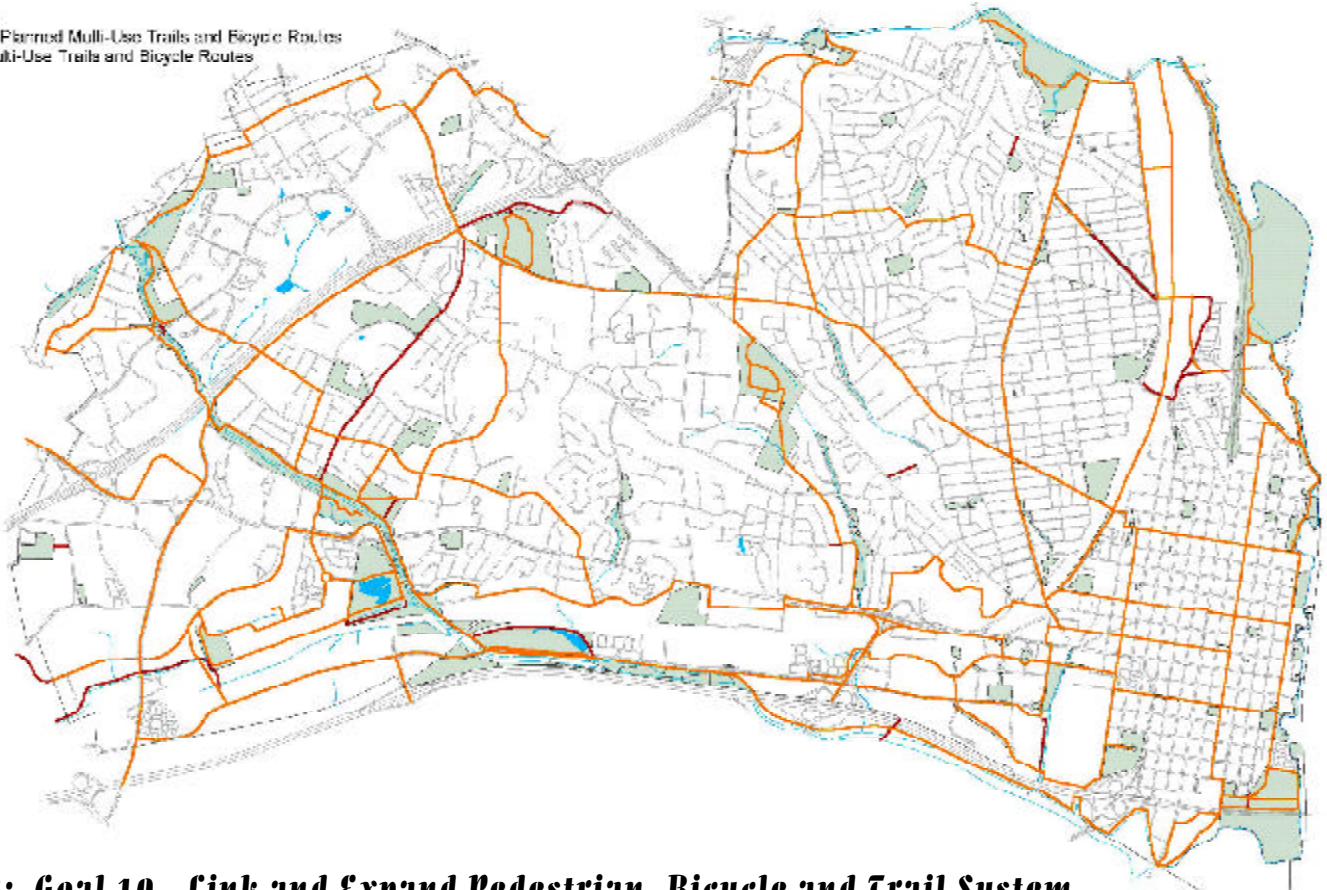


Figure 26: Goal 10 - Link and Expand Pedestrian, Bicycle and Trail System



Trail at Oronoco Bay Park



Trail at Oronoco Bay Park

City, thereby promoting educational and tourism opportunities.

Implementation Strategies for Goal 10

- Work with the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services to implement bike trails in public rights-of-ways (e.g., streets)
- Work on a site-by-site basis with private property owners to seek easements for trail development and expansion.
- Reassess and revise the Alexandria Trails Plan to provide the connections identified in the Open Space Plan.
- Alexandria's Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Department of Transportation and Environmental Services should coordinate regional planning efforts for trail linkages with Fairfax and Arlington Counties, VDOT and the National Park Service.
- The City should aggressively seek private, state, and Federal funding for continued trail development (see Chapter 6).
- The Departments of Transportation and Environmental Services; Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities; and Office of Historic Alexandria should work together to improve trail signage, provide public education through pamphlets, maps, and web sites, mark historic sites and natural resources, and create events to encourage trail use by both walkers and riders.
- Evaluate the City's network of public alleys and define those most appropriate for use as trail and open space connectors.
- The Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Transportation and Environmental Services should collaborate with the School Department to identify "Safe Routes to School" using the trail system and other public streets. Coordinate with the proposed "Safe Routes" national effort and seek funding when it becomes available.
- The Department of Transportation and Environmental Services and the Department of Planning and Zoning should encourage developers to include facilities for bicyclists and walkers in their Transportation Management Plans.
- The Departments of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Transportation and Environmental Services should develop a multi-lingual public education campaign to promote bicycling and walking as effective and healthful ways to get around town while reducing traffic congestion.